

MEETING WITH [REDACTED] (JERSEY CHOICE & GARDEN DIRECT) ON 29/9/17

Vacated Retreat Farm in the Spring of 2015. There was no longer a requirement for Retreat Farm as had 9 acres at Grantez and Meadow Springs which was suitable for their operation, plus polytunnels at Hougue Bie and Aigremont.

At the height of their operation (2004/5) the operation, making postal gift boxes for the UK market employed between 100 employees during the shoulder months to 400 employees during the busiest time at Christmas. It would vary between these numbers, but towards the higher level between March and May and August and October and the lower level during the other months. By far the most staff were in the packing station (between 30 and 300). There would be between 20 and 50 telesales staff taking orders, 12 to 15 in the administrative office and 3 to 4 in the polystyrene box manufacture. At most, only 30 employees were involved in the horticultural side of the business.

Leading up to, and during the busy periods (March to May and August to October), the operation would be open until 9pm most evenings. At Christmas the operation would be 24/7 with three shifts. The packing station would therefore be lit up at Christmas (24/7) and in March and October until 9pm.

100% of flowers for the gift boxes were imported (mainly from Columbia)

100% of plug plants would be grown in Jersey (at Meadow Springs and Retreat Farm).

The operation generated significant traffic, including a high number of HGV trips which were mostly P30 articulated lorries, mostly between 3 and 9 weekly, but rising to between 30 in March to May and between August and October and up to 60 during the week leading up to Christmas.

There were also significant number of HGV and van movements between the operation's different nurseries (Meadow Springs) ranging from 15 per week to 75 per week during the busier periods.

Staff vehicle movements to and from the site would be between 200 and 800 movements per week.

The glass at Retreat Farm is old fashioned and would need to be renewed to grow tomatoes, cucumbers or peppers. There is no market for flowers.

Their only competition locally, Blooming Direct, were forced to close after LCVR was abolished in 2013.

If the business were to be started afresh by Jersey Choice, it would not be operated from Jersey.

The operation would have used between £200k and £300k annually on oil to heat the greenhouses.

The operation did not have a good relationship with neighbours.

Complaints regarding pollution from polystyrene manufacture and boilers and also about vibrations caused by the operation.